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COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE
QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING
OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Improving the capacity of the United Nations for peace-keeping

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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NEW ZEALAND

[Original: English]

[3 September 1993]

1. The Government of New Zealand welcomes the request of the Secretary-General of 11 June 1993 for views on enhancing the capacity of the United Nations in respect of its peace-keeping operations and fully supports the 28 May 1993 statement of the Security Council (S/25859) that gave rise to the Secretary-General's request. The Secretary-General's request is a timely one, as the Organization looks for new ways of meeting current and future peace-keeping challenges.

2. The United Nations first priority should be to improve its capacity to plan, command and conduct multinational peace-keeping operations, including those mandated to have recourse to force under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. In particular New Zealand stresses the importance of:

(a) The Security Council defining precisely the mandate of each operation, with clear political objectives;

(b) The translation of the mandate into clearly defined operational objectives, including time-frames where appropriate;

(c) Regular assessments of existing operations, including reviewing the scope of their termination;

(d) Such assessments to review operational plans to ensure that action on the ground remains linked to the ongoing political process and that mandates and plans do not become decoupled as the situation evolves;

(e) Host Governments living up to their obligations to ensure safety of and respect for the status of United Nations peace-keeping personnel, and persons who attack peace-keepers being held to account for their actions;

(f) Where required, defining more clearly the right to self-defence, and the use of appropriate force, to assure the safety of United Nations personnel, together with the incorporation of these aspects in mandate and planning development;

(g) Regular briefings being provided in New York to troop-contributing countries on the conduct of operations.

4. Peace-keeping is an activity in which all Member States have a role to play. New Zealand regrets the failure on the part of some States to meet obligations in respect of peace-keeping operations, whether because of tardy financial contributions or through lack of cooperation with a United Nations force.

5. New Zealand also maintains that a special onus is placed upon the permanent members of the Security Council to set an example in all aspects of peace-keeping, including willingness to contribute significant forces under United Nations command and control, and to pay promptly and in full their assessed financial contributions.

6. With the proliferation of the challenges to global stability and security, it can be assumed that demands on the Security Council for more forceful action will continue to grow. In this, the guiding principles are those of Chapters VI and VII of the Charter. In the main, operations are carried out by forces directly under the control of the Secretary-General, and authorized by the Security Council. In some circumstances, action has involved national forces, regional organizations or purpose-formed coalitions authorized by the Security Council. Beyond the need to define carefully the command and control relationships between such forces and the United Nations, the degree to which these groupings offer practised command, control and operational synergies to the United Nations should not be overlooked.

I. SECRETARIAT STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

7. New Zealand has long argued for a more integrated peace-keeping structure. It therefore strongly endorses the recent steps taken by the Secretary-General towards the restructuring of those parts of the Secretariat involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations, including the establishment of a Department of Peace-keeping Operations and a Situation Room, as well as an enhanced peace-keeping planning staff.

8. In terms of the Secretariat structure, New Zealand:

(a) Supports the development of a corps of Professional staff, funded through regular United Nations arrangements;

(b) Recognizes that for some time yet, the Secretary-General will need specialist staff seconded from Member States. New Zealand has provided such assistance in the past, and stands ready to make staff available to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, including the Situation Room, and to the Office of the Military Adviser as appropriate;

(c) Subject to relevant procedures, endorses the evolving practice of the United Nations contracting out for the supply of certain specialist personnel, equipment and services such as aircraft, as relevant and cost-effective in certain circumstances;

(d) Believes that in addition to relying on personnel and services supplied by the Government of a Member State, the United Nations must also be able to draw on appropriate non-governmental sources.

9. With regard to the implementation of the Council's mandates, New Zealand believes the Secretary-General, under the overall guidance of the Security Council, should provide:

(a) Strategic direction to special representatives and force commanders;

(b) Clear lines of political direction and operational command and management at all levels, ensuring unity both within United Nations Headquarters and in the field;

(c) Around-the-clock monitoring of operations and timely responses, and coordination of logistic/military requirements of theatre commanders.

10. The Secretariat should be responsible for:

(a) Coordinating and disseminating in a timely way inputs from national information sources;

(b) Preparing and maintaining outline contingency plans for United Nations missions;

(c) Developing and promulgating common operational staff procedures, standard operating procedures, rules of engagement and logistic doctrine;

(d) Developing standardized command and control policies, including definitions;

(e) Undertaking post-operation assessments, acting as a repository for the collective experience of all aspects of United Nations operations and providing advice or recommendations for current or future operations;

(f) Coordinating and liaising with troop- and equipment-contributing States.

II. PLANNING, MOUNTING AND CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS

11. In the planning phase, in which the role of key United Nations Headquarters staff is central, it is important that:

(a) The force commander and his key staff should be identified and appointed at an early stage;

(b) They should also participate in operational reconnaissance prior to the conduct of planning;

(c) The broad operational plan is developed by United Nations Headquarters staff in close consultation with the force commander, within the strategic directives and guidance flowing from the mandate;

(d) The force commander, having been given clear objectives and working within the framework of a broad operational plan, should assume primary responsibility for developing detailed operational and logistic plans, with support as needed from the Department of Peace-keeping Operations;

(e) To facilitate planning, a range of accurate and timely information should be available, especially to match capabilities and equipment to the perceived risk.

12. Mounting an operation requires a continuity of planning and execution, involving United Nations Headquarters planning staff, and the early forging of an operational Headquarters staff. In particular:

(a) Realistic command post exercises keyed to the operation would be useful in confirming planning, doctrinal, logistic and equipment requirements, and chains of command;

(b) Such exercises would also facilitate the correction of any omissions in and the refinements of standard procedures;

(c) Where possible, national contingent commanders and their staff should work up with the operational headquarters;

(d) Where practicable, contingents should undergo a period of predeployment training to enhance integration with the combined operational structure. This could take place in home locations or in the theatre. However, prior attendance of key national contingent staff at the operational headquarters work-up would contribute significantly to more relevant predeployment training and subsequent integration.

13. The good conduct of a peace-keeping operation depends on command, control, communications and information. New Zealand therefore stresses that:

(a) It is the task of the Secretary-General to clarify and reinforce the necessary coordination of military with other operation objectives;

(b) Within the bounds of appropriate levels of control by United Nations Headquarters and any special representative, the force commander should have the flexibility to adjust operational plans or make decisions to meet military imperatives on the ground;

(c) Operational control of all military forces should rest with a single operational-level commander;

(d) Personnel deployed should be professionally competent. The force commander should be provided with avenues to correct or recommend the removal of unsatisfactory performers. Contributing States have an onus to ensure staff selected measure up to United Nations standards;

(e) Forces need common rules of engagement, staff procedures and standard operating procedures, drawn from a United Nations doctrine. Development of such a doctrine is a major priority and could come from an examination of procedures already developed within existing alliances;

(f) Satisfactory arrangements are agreed between contributing States and the United Nations that allow the force commander to exercise the necessary operational authority while taking into account national command considerations;

(g) Rapid and unimpeded communications are essential and may require the use of secure means when the disclosure of United Nations intentions might place troops at risk. Force commanders also need to be able to collect, analyse and

disseminate military information locally and to assimilate this in a timely manner with political and military information from United Nations Headquarters;

(h) Force commanders and United Nations representatives in the field must also be conscious of the requirement that relevant political and military information be communicated rapidly to United Nations Headquarters for briefing of the Security Council and troop-contributing countries.

III. AVAILABILITY OF FORCES

14. To react quickly, the United Nations requires rapid access to updated information on potential contributions and their likely availability from Member States. It must therefore develop and manage an appropriate database.

15. New Zealand has routinely provided the Secretary-General with information on personnel and equipment it might in principle make available at short notice. Accordingly:

(a) It welcomes the establishment of a Stand-by Forces Study Team and the forthcoming visit of this team. This project is valuable in aiding national planning, promoting more rapid deployment and ensuring proper equipping of contingents;

(b) It would also welcome the further examination by the Team of the merits of quick start/short duration stand-by units and their expeditious replacement by longer-term contingents;

(c) With a small defence force and other commitments, New Zealand has made, and will continue to make, contributions on a case-by-case basis.

IV. LIMITED REVOLVING RESERVE OF EQUIPMENT

16. New Zealand took note of the proposal made in the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations for the establishment of a reserve stock of equipment as a buffer to be drawn on for new and ongoing operations and subsequently replenished (A/48/173, paras. 13 and 59):

(a) It looks to the Secretary-General to advise on the cost-effectiveness of holding stocks, in the light of factors such as storage and transportation costs, obsolescence and compatibility (between forces, as well as operation-by-operation);

(b) The United Nations should also review its database of equipment that Member States could make available at short notice for a peace-keeping operation.

V. TRAINING AND STANDARDIZATION OF PROCEDURES

17. Effective and focused training is the key to a successful operation. At its heart is proper preparation at the national level. The responsibility for developing and implementing the required standards falls on both the Secretariat and participating States. The Secretariat's role is, as a matter of priority, to prepare and promulgate common doctrines and procedures (both military and civilian), and training materials and programmes for national trainers. Force commanders must be involved at an early stage in the process of determining relevant training requirements for an operation. Member States need to incorporate these guidelines into national training programmes as appropriate and to undertake operation-specific training prior to deployment.

18. New Zealand:

(a) Sees scope for more cooperation between Member States in regional training programmes and is already exploring these possibilities;

(b) Notes proposals for multinational peace-keeping exercises, but believes that this level of training should be considered at a later stage, once national and regional programmes are in place;

(c) Supports the development by the Secretariat of training guidelines, performance standards, standardized curricula and training fellowships as recommended at the 1993 session of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations;

(d) Also supports the provision of further in-theatre training, should the operation require it.

VI. SAFETY OF PERSONNEL

19. New Zealand proposals to the Security Council in March led to the adoption of a statement calling for an early report by the Secretary-General on the adequacy of current arrangements for the protection of United Nations forces and personnel and with appropriate recommendations to enhance the safety of United Nations personnel. Subsequently, New Zealand submitted a paper to the Secretary-General that supported a range of measures being elaborated in relevant United Nations bodies.

20. There is an urgent need to focus specific attention on the question of responsibility for attacks on United Nations personnel and the consequential question of measures to ensure that those who carry out such attacks are brought to speedy trial under an appropriate legal regime. The United Nations should have the means, where necessary, to hold such individuals personally responsible. International law relating to the protection of United Nations forces should be no less effective than the rules protecting combatant forces. There is a clear need for the innovative development of international law in these areas.

21. New Zealand has accordingly proposed that:

(a) The Security Council pay particular attention to the safety of personnel issues when establishing mandates for peace-keeping operations. In principle, no troops should be deployed without undertakings from all parties to a conflict that the safety of United Nations personnel will be assured;

(b) An item relating to the safety of United Nations personnel be inscribed on the agenda of the forthcoming session of the General Assembly;

(c) Work should begin on the elaboration of a new legal convention to fill gaps in existing international law.

VII. NON-MILITARY ELEMENTS

22. Military components of peace-keeping need to be more fully integrated with associated social and economic activities of the United Nations. The inclusion of civilian components as part of United Nations military operations is now seen as essential; but there are wider issues to be addressed. If military action is to be avoided, and if peace-keeping operations are to be successful over the longer term, then peace-keeping - especially preventive diplomacy and peace-building - must be about economic and social responses, as well as about military activity. Resources need to be directed towards developing these two phases of the international community's involvement as well as towards peace-keeping and peacemaking.

23. But beyond the operations themselves, the time has come for a closer examination of how the United Nations should organize its involvement once the primary peace-keeping phase has concluded:

(a) At that time, in a phase distinct from military involvement, it would be appropriate to consider mechanisms for the establishment for a "partnership arrangement" between the United Nations and local people in the task of rebuilding a nation that would contribute materially to problem-solving and conflict resolution;

(b) Under such an arrangement, with input from all parts of the United Nations system, the rebuilding phase could be centred on a single coordinating body at United Nations Headquarters.

24. New Zealand regards the integrated peace-keeping operations that have been a feature of recent operations as entirely appropriate. It has contributed police and civilian personnel to a number of such operations. In its view:

(a) Training programmes should include the military and non-military elements of operations;

(b) Lines of coordination and command between the non-military elements of peace-keeping operations (humanitarian, political, legal, police and administrative) and the military components must ensure that respective mission activities are coherent and internally supportive.

VIII. INFORMATION ACQUISITION

25. New Zealand supports measures by the Secretary-General aimed at improving the quality and timeliness of information germane to the good conduct of a peace-keeping operation:

(a) The establishment of regional divisions and a Policy and Analysis Unit within the Department of Peace-keeping Operations is a welcome first step;

(b) The United Nations also needs to enhance its secure systems to facilitate the acquisition of a more comprehensive range of information central to the conduct and security of an operation.

IX. REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

26. The Government of New Zealand supports a greater role for regional organizations in peacemaking and conflict prevention. Their knowledge of local conditions is an asset on which the United Nations can and should draw. The report of the Secretary-General that addresses views of a number of regional organizations (S/25996) is a useful start. A broader range of response would clearly assist the Secretary-General in formulating recommendations for his September report.

X. FINANCIAL MATTERS

27. The resolution of budgetary problems is the crux issue. The burden of peace-keeping today is such that the onus is on all Member States to meet assessed contributions in full and on time. Otherwise, the system stands to collapse:

(a) Penalties for late or non-payment, as have been mooted by the Secretary-General, merit fuller consideration;

(b) Payments of peace-keeping assessments on time would obviate the need for a peace-keeping reserve fund beyond existing levels. It would also enable the Organization as a whole better to manage its regular budget;

(c) New Zealand fully supports the maintenance of a peace-keeping reserve fund at around $150 million. While noting proposals for its increase to around $400 million, it believes a larger fund would not be necessary if the level of on-time payments were raised substantially. It should not be for those countries which meet their dues to provide a long-term peace-keeping subsidy for the late payers;

(d) New Zealand sees merit in the development of a unified peace budget and single annual assessment to cover the recurrent costs of ongoing peace-keeping missions, and including a small margin for new and unexpected missions. To uphold consistency with the periodic reviews of mandates by the Security Council, the latter element should not be drawn upon without prior approval of the Council and a normal appropriation. This approach would facilitate a better cash flow forecasting both by Member States and the Organization itself;

(e) New Zealand fully supports the proposal for the Secretary-General to obligate up to 20 per cent of estimated costs of an operation. Indeed, it has already put on record its preparedness for a higher figure, of one third, as recommended by the Secretary-General;

(f) Greater financial authority could be passed to the special representative and force commander/chief military observer of an operation. Suitable financial control arrangements could be strengthened through the appointment of an Inspector-General.

28. While recognizing that the scale of assessments for peace-keeping operations is a matter that demands careful examination and is related to exercise on budgetary reform that go beyond the scope of this paper, New Zealand sees considerable merit in the conclusions of the Ford Foundation study on "Financing an Effective United Nations", in particular, New Zealand would welcome further discussion on the study's recommendation that a greater number of above average per capita GNP countries should pay the same percentage for peace-keeping assessments as for the regular budget.

XI. PUBLIC INFORMATION

29. Recent developments have pointed clearly to the need for the United Nations to boost the dissemination of information about its peace-keeping activities:

(a) In the immediate term, there is a responsibility - which a host country shares - to ensure that the purposes of a peace-keeping mission are fully explained to affected civilians. Developing support among and within directly affected States is, as the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations concluded this year, of tremendous importance (A/48/173, paras. 34 and 106);

(b) So too is the dissemination of information more widely, to troop-contributing countries and to other interested parties as well as the public at large. New Zealand believes that the United Nations already has the capacity to develop its information systems for peace-keeping, without major additional financial input;

(c) An early task of the new Policy and Analysis Unit of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations should be to develop more focused information dissemination systems, appropriately targeted, both within the Secretariat and in the field.